



LAWLOR

INTELLIGENT MARKETING
SOLUTIONS FOR EDUCATION

“Pursue a liberal arts education. For most people, it’s the best foundation for a successful career.”

“The formula for businesses trying to compete in today’s economy is simple: hire employees with the mental agility, leadership, and passion to navigate constant change—in other words, hire those who are liberally educated.”

—A.G. LAFLEY
HAMILTON COLLEGE
GRADUATE,
RETIRED CHAIRMAN OF
PROCTER & GAMBLE



Translating the Liberal Arts

The new normal of our nation’s economic climate has brought about the rise of the prudent consumer who is frugal, cautious, and seeks proof of value before making significant investments—including paying for a college education. With the national unemployment rate hovering at its highest level in recent memory, prospective students want to be assured that they’ll gain the career skills they need to land a well-paying job upon graduation. Employers do indeed value the skills that a liberal arts education provides, but too few families in the higher education marketplace seem to understand the value of the liberal arts.

WHAT FAMILIES THINK

- 47% of Americans say the main purpose of college should be to acquire specific skills and knowledge that can be used in the workplace, while 39% say it should be to help an individual grow personally and intellectually. (Pew Research Center)
- The most common response of first-year students in 2010 when asked what reasons were very important for going to college was “to be able to get a better job,” cited by 84.7%; “to get training for a specific career” was cited by 77.6%. (CIRP)
- “This school’s graduates get good jobs” was cited by 53.3% of first-year students in 2010 as a reason for choosing their college, second only to “this college has a very good academic reputation” at 62%. (CIRP)

WHAT EMPLOYERS WANT

- 55% of hiring decision-makers believe most students would be better served by a broad-based education that helps them choose their best career path, while 45% prefer an education that specifically prepares them for the workplace. (ACICS)
- 59% of executives think that graduates who want to pursue advancement and long-term career success at their organizations need both a broad range of skills and knowledge that apply to a range of fields and positions and in-depth knowledge and skills that apply to a specific field or position. (AACU)
- The areas that employers feel colleges need to focus on most include written and oral communication (89%), critical thinking and analytical reasoning (81%), the application of knowledge and skills in real-world settings

(79%), complex problem solving and analysis (75%), ethical decision-making (75%), teamwork skills (71%), innovation and creativity (70%), and concepts and developments in science and technology (70%). (AACU)

WHAT ALUMNI EXPERIENCE

- 76% of liberal arts college graduates rated their college experience highly for preparing them for their first job, compared to 66% who attended public flagship universities. (Annapolis Group)
- 60% of liberal arts college graduates said they felt “better prepared for life after college than students who attended other colleges,” while only 34% of graduates who attended public flagship universities said so. (Annapolis Group)
- Of people who majored in humanities and liberal arts, 15% work in education services, 11% in professional services, 10% in financial services, 9% in retail trade, and 9% in health services. (Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce)

WHAT COLLEGES CAN DO

- Communicate via various marketing/brand touchpoints about the value of the liberal arts. Go beyond mastery of subject matter to focus on skills learned.
- Provide a better understanding of what graduates can do with liberal arts majors. Present evidence of post-graduation success and engage alumni in showcasing it.
- Develop an advising program and invest in programming within the career center so that both can cultivate a better understanding of the relevance and outcomes of a liberal arts education.

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